

In the Spotlight

The Douglas Block was the heart of the thriving African-American business district on East Thomas Street. In keeping with the area's rich history, the City of Rocky Mount has unveiled a plan that calls for its redevelopment.

The mixed-use plan calls for commercial, residential and passive uses. It also includes new construction and the preservation of the façade along East Thomas Street, including the "Booker T" Theater which has the last surviving theater marquee in the Central City National Register Historic District.



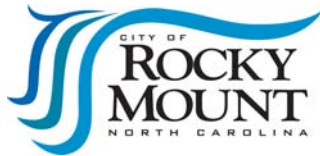
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Downtown News

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Downtown Stakeholders Meeting- December 9th at 5:30PM at the Church of the Good Shepherd



The Rocky Mount Chamber of Commerce and the Central City Revitalization Panel (CCRP) are hosting this meeting to give a status report on the downtown and discuss the formation of a merchant's association. Items to be discussed include: The Douglas Block Plan, the Traffic Circulation Study, the Downtown Action Plan and the renovation of the People's Bank Building. It will also be an opportunity to meet Ian Kipp, Rocky Mount's Downtown Development Manager.

The meeting is open to anyone interested in improving and promoting downtown. Please come prepared to discuss your ideas for revitalizing Rocky Mount's central city.

Ian Kipp Takes Over as Rocky Mount's Downtown Development Manager

Ian Kipp assumed the role of Downtown Development Manager on October 6th, 2004. Ian was raised in Westchester County, New York and has spent the past ten years working on a downtown project in Yonkers, a rust-belt city of nearly 200,000 on the Hudson River, just north of Manhattan. Leslie Anderson, who has been the Interim Downtown Manager since early 2003, will be working closely with Kipp to ensure a smooth transition and the successful implementation of on-going programs and initiatives.

Kipp works closely with the Central City Revitalization Panel, among other downtown stakeholder groups. Working in conjunction with the Panel, Kipp will be working with property owners and merchants to immediately impact the overall appearance of downtown. Other design, beautification and marketing initiatives will follow in 2005- with the end of highlighting the many assets that the central city possesses. On the agenda for early 2005 is the introduction of a downtown logo. This logo will appear on all downtown related promotional material and will help to "brand" Rocky Mount's central city.

The Office of Downtown Development will work with the soon-to-be-completed inventory of downtown properties to be able to match prospective investors and businesses with downtown properties. One of the biggest problems in the area is a lack of renovated storefronts and residential units. Accordingly, it will be working closely with property owners to assist with "filling the financial gap" that currently exists- so that building may be sensitively renovated and then rented. The Action Plan's ultimate goal for central city building stock is for each building to historically renovated and put to its highest and best use. The Plan envision for downtown Rocky Mount is a vibrant, mixed-use 18-hour district with a mix of commercial establishments including boutiques, cafes, restaurants and housing opportunities on upper floors. The Action Plan will be presented to the City Council in early 2005.



Now Renting. Build to Suit Office Space In Rocky Mount's Signature Landmark

Durham-based Self-Help Credit Union is seeking tenants for Rocky Mount's most prominent downtown building, the former People's Bank Building at 101 Tarboro Street. The office suites will be built to suit and rent for \$12 per square foot including common area maintenance (CAM). The redevelopment of the landmark will cost about \$3.5 Million.



Self-Help is well suited for the project, having redeveloped similar prominent landmarks in Asheville, Charlotte, Durham, Fayetteville, Greenville, Wilmington and Wilson. Self-Help is one of the nation's largest Community Development Finance Institutions (CFDI's) with over \$100 Million in deposits and over \$1 Billion in assets. For more information about the credit union log on to

<http://www.self-help.org>

For more information about this project contact Ben Grinnell at (919) 956 4423, (800) 476-7428 or ben@self-help.org

Spruce Up Your Downtown

Many underutilized downtown properties have been allowed to fall into disrepair. Understandably, some area property owners are figuring out their long-term plans for their properties before making any improvements at all. While this may be the case, the rest of the area suffers from unsightly conditions. Property owners will be contacted about simple cosmetic changes that will have an important effect on how the area is viewed. A few low-cost ideas to consider, even if you have a vacant building, are as follows: create a phantom storefront in the display area, paint faded doors, walls or window frames, paint over or remove outdated signage and replace missing glass panes.

Opportunities for Investment in Downtown

116 SW Main Street- 1870's Loft Building with restored cast-iron façade for sale. Large footprint great potential as multi-use building! Contact Julian May at (252) 442-5919.

152-4 & 158 SW Main Street- For sale side by side 110' deep historic buildings. 24 and 40 linear feet respectively. Contact Theo Pitt, Jr. at (252) 454-0602.

114 NW Main Street- For lease. Small historically renovated storefront with mezzanine level. Contact Darin Scott at (252) 813-5582

The properties listed above are only a partial listing of investment opportunities in the central city area. This information is published solely to promote the public interest in revitalization of the central city as part of the overall economic improvement of the City of Rocky Mount. Neither the Downtown Development Office nor the City of Rocky Mount has any intent to act in any capacity as an agent for the sale or lease of these properties. For further information call 972-1267.